

W.H. MILLIER weighs in against the 'Bash and Batter Boys'

I AM frequently asked to give my opinion on present-day boxers, and I know it does not always please the hearers when I give the short answer, "They are not boxers." The truth, all too frequently, is unpalatable, but there are times when it is necessary to insist on driving it home. It would be a disservice to an entertaining sport to praise the mediocre and to gloss over the bad patches. How can anyone expect even an approach towards perfection if the performers are permitted to persuade themselves that they have reached the pinnacle when they are but on the bottom step?

I realise how difficult it must be for newcomers to the ring to visualise how great so many of the old champions were and how poor so many of the present-day performers are. To the man who has never tasted real butter, war-time margarine is the height of luxury.

It is a fact that when the leading champions are exceptionally skilful it follows that the second-raters are better than the champions of a lean period. The reason is plain. Boxing at its best is both an art and a science. If the definition of art as practical skill guided by rules is accepted, and that science is knowledge arranged under general truths and principles, then boxing comes under both headings.

At the present time it appears to be a lost art largely because there are so few of the skilful old-timers left to teach it, even if one could discover youngsters willing to go to all the pains and trouble to learn. Skilful boxing can only be acquired by practice, but all the practice in the world is not enough if one does not know the strokes to be practised. Nearly all the old-timers will tell you that they learned most by watching the really skilful champions of their day in the ring.

FATHER OF BOXING. Jem Mace has always been acknowledged as the father of modern boxing, and he probably learned and improved upon the technique of Tom King and other champions of his day. Tom Allen, a contemporary of Mace, went to America in 1869 and settled in St. Louis. There is no doubt that he left his mark on American boxing.

Mace fought and defeated Allen in America, and then, after a fight with Joe Coburn in St. Louis, he went to Australia. He saw there were



"Don't you think we ought to go back now, sailor—they might miss me at the cinema!"

great possibilities in Larry Foley and took the Australian under his wing and taught him all he knew. Foley later opened an academy and passed on his knowledge to many who were destined to become famous.

The great Peter Jackson declared that he learned most from watching Mace boxing in exhibition bouts and afterwards practised what he had seen in the gymnasium until he perfected each movement.

Some years ago I was asked to review a book on boxing, which shall be nameless. After recognising much of my own material, which had been lifted, I came across a passage which made me grin.

The writer mentioned how he had spotted among the spectators who were watching a certain champion preparing for a forthcoming battle two world-famous fighters, Jem Mace and Bob Fitzsimmons. How he must have thrown a chest as he wrote: "I then introduced them to each other."

How the old champions must have chuckled, as they kidded our friend they were meeting for the first time. It was Mace who taught Fitzsimmons how to box. Bob was a young blacksmith living at Timaru, New Zealand, when he first met Mace. The old master took him in hand, and then, when he felt that his pupil was sufficiently proficient, Mace, in 1880, promoted a tournament for the amateur championship of New Zealand, which Fitzsimmons duly won.

In the following year Mace promoted another tournament at Timaru, and again Fitzsimmons won by knocking out five opponents in the one night. Thus was Fitz launched on his career as a professional boxer.

He was born at Helston in Cornwall in 1863, and was taken to New Zealand as a boy. All the record books (bar one) give the date of his birth as 1862. Here is an instance of how errors are perpetuated, since, when data is copied, errors are usually included. As some years ago I myself searched the register at Somerset House and found that Fitzsimmons was born in 1863, you may know that that is the correct year.

TAUGHT ENGLISH WAY. That is by the way. The curious thing is that, although Fitzsimmons was taught his boxing by an Englishman, and was the very last Englishman to hold the world's heavyweight championship, he never fought in the country of his birth.

After a few contests in Australia, Fitz went to the United

States in 1890, and it was not until 19 years later that he returned to Australia when long past his prime to fight Bill Lang. That was the only occasion he fought away from the United States after he went there in 1890.

Apart from the fact that there was more money to be earned in America than could be had here, we did not possess any champion capable of challenging Fitzsimmons in his heyday, which means that the present dearth of high-ranking champions is by no means new. Just show business comes of giving as the lean years follow the fat years, so the rise and fall of skill in fisticuffs goes in cycles.

The second- and third-raters of the fat years may be far and away superior to the champions of the lean years, and the reason for this is self-evident. What is not so easy of explanation is why the lean periods are so prolonged.

It is a trite remark to say that champions are born, not made. Your so-called born fighter will not get very far towards championship status if he does not learn all there is to know about the art of boxing. Do you think the world would have known of Bob Fitzsimmons, the champion boxer, if he had never met Jem Mace? It might have done, but the chances are that Bob would scarcely have been known outside Timaru, where he would doubtless have continued his work of blacksmith.

There is little doubt that Fitzsimmons greatly influenced the American school of boxing, and there was a time some years later when we had to thank American boxers for re-introducing what we are pleased to term the real English style of scientific boxing back into its country of origin, where it had almost been forgotten.

The so-called American style is no style at all. It came here a few years before jazz, and bears as much relation to skilful boxing as does jazz to real music. That, of course, is all a matter of taste. Many people like jazz and many more like to see slap-dash slogging in preference to scientific boxing. It is here that we arrive at one of the real reasons for the deterioration of boxing skill. Promoters are concerned with making money, and as they fully realise that money in the public what it wants, directly the bash-and-batter merchants captured the popular fancy, the highly skilful performers went out by the back door.

In recent years boxing has belonged more to the world of entertainment than of sport. Thus, the older generation, which feared that commercialism would kill the sport, were not far wrong in their fears. The sadistic customer who pays a big price for his ringside seat likes to see buckets of blood, and he calls the tune. But this sort of thing is already beginning to die a well-merited death.

THE ECONOMIC REASON.

There are, of course, other reasons why professional boxing has gone down to the depths, and one of them concerns economics. The ranks of professional boxers were filled for the most part, as was the old-time Army, by out-of-work, who had to fight or starve. The advent of the dole altered all that. Obviously, nobody in his sober senses would suggest returning to that wretched period just for the off-chance of finding a few style of scientific boxing back champions among those driven by desperation to fight for their living.

One of the most notable

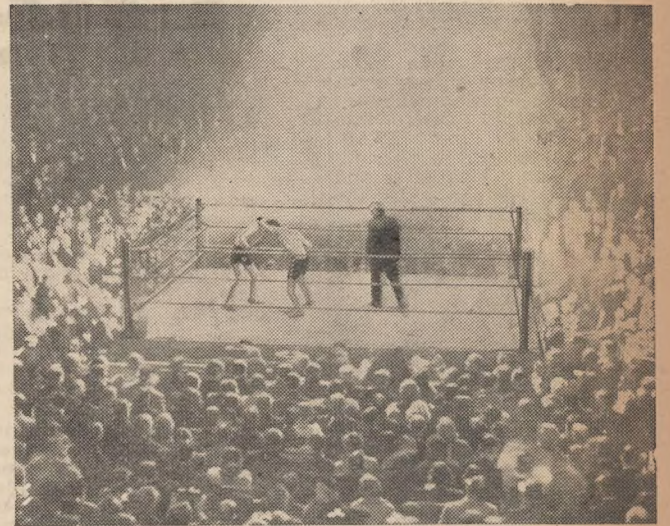


Mrs. Elizabeth Abbott serving in the bar.



Mrs. Elizabeth Abbott, licensee of the Blacksmith's Arms, Luton, who celebrated her 80th birthday recently, is seen in this picture with some of the soft toys she has made for local children.

BOXING—IS IT A LOST ART?



In recent years Boxing has belonged more to the world of entertainment than of sport.

champions of modern times, Jimmy Wilde, who was so poor in his early days that he could not afford to employ sparring partners, used to box with his wife. He meant to get to the top in order to be able to leave his work as a coal miner. Would he, one wonders, have gone to such pains to become a champion if he had had quit of some soul-destroying occupation. I doubt it.

Here's a lady full of life. Mrs. ABBOTT of LUTON looks back on things for you

"IT'S an interesting life, is in the soccer sphere if it concerns 'her boys.'" Mrs. Elizabeth Abbott told me.

"I've been in the business a long time, and I wouldn't change for anyone," she added. Mrs. Abbott is the licensee of the Blacksmith's Arms at Luton, and she has just celebrated a birthday—her eightieth.

It was seventy-four years ago that she first entered a public-house. At that time she was six, and the inn was that of her parents, in Kettering. In 1885, after her marriage, Mrs. Abbott and her husband took their own pub, the Crown Inn, Rothwell, later to move to Kettering to take over the Queen Hotel, where they lived for twenty years.

During the last war they moved to Luton, and since her husband's death in 1933 she has carried on alone.

It is hard to believe that Mrs. Abbott is eighty; true, her hair is white, but her eyes are full of life; true, her hands are wrinkly now, but her movements are nimble; true, too, that her eyes are not as strong as they were, but she still knits comforts for the troops.

It's an ordinary kind of pub, the Blacksmith's Arms. It's clean and it's friendly, and the beer comes from the wood.

Behind Mrs. Abbott, on a glass shelf, is a photograph of "Ten-goal" Payne, the Luton Town footballer who netted ten times in one match for the town team. Mrs. Abbott is a keen follower of the local team. She has never seen a football match, but she listens intently to the chatter in the bar, and she can be relied upon to be up to date with anything new

When Luton Town came to London for a Cup-tie, she knitted a pair of trousers, a jersey and skull cap for a supporter who travelled as mascot. Practically every pair of black and white socks that have appeared in the Town dressing-rooms have come off the needles of Mrs. Abbott, of the Blacksmith's Arms.

In the summer months she makes cloth toys, and at Christmas she sends them to the British Legion to be distributed to the local kiddies.

Local charities have benefited considerably by her work. Many are the toy dogs and household articles she has made and sold for their funds, and more than one harvest festival has been organised by her to raise money for Luton Parish Church.

"The specialist has given my eyes up as a bad job," she told me, "but I'm not very worried really—I can still do fine knitting, and I can still enjoy the garden."

Mrs. Abbott had a birthday last week; she enjoyed it more than any she could remember, she said. "But she says that every year," her son told me.

This was the first year she didn't have candles on her cake. "But I had icing, and that's more important," she remarked. Mrs. Abbott was happy when she brought out her cake, complete with illuminated decorations. She made it herself, and that, too, was better than any she could remember.

RONALD RICHARDS.

WANGLING WORDS—III

1. Place the same two letters, in the same order, both before and after OUSAND, to make a word.
2. Rearrange the letters of R.N.R. BUT SOBER, to make a famous poet.
3. Altering one letter at a time, and making a new word with each alteration, change: BIG into TOE, BOIL into HARD, MOON into STAR, RUSH into HOUR.
4. How many four-letter and five-letter words can you make from TRANSLITERATE?

Answers to Wangling Words—No. 110

1. John Underhill. Andover, Hants.
2. PORTSMOUTH.
3. RENT, DENT, DONT, DONE, DANE, LANE, LONE, CONE, CORE, CORK, COOK, BOOK.
RAIN, WAIN, WARN, WORN, MORN, MOAN, MOAT, COAT.
ARM, AIM, AIR, FIR, FIG, BIG, BEG, LEG.
RED, BED, BAD, SAD, SAY, SKY.
4. Corn, Cone, Coin, Loin, Lorn, Core, Coif, Cord, Fire, Fore, File, Fine, Fern, Lane, Lien, Rife, Node, Done, etc.
Field, Finer, Force, Fired, Fined, Lined, Diner, Liner, Fried, Cored, Decor, Frond, Rifle, Flier, Filer, Cried, Lifer, Fiend, etc.

All men that are ruined, are ruined on the side of their natural propensities.
Edmund Burke.

TODAY'S PICTURE QUIZ



Ever seen a giant tortoise? Perhaps this is part of one, although it may be part of—a Rhino, Elephant, Hippo, or even Tapir. At any rate, it is something to think about. Answer to Picture Quiz in No. 154: Armadillo.

JANE



Concluding "THEY CARRIED BLACK DYNAMITE"

By Prosper Merinee

The End of "The Hope"

SOME of the negroes were in tears; others raised their hands to the sky, and called on their own and the white man's fetishes; others knelt down by the compass and wondered at its ceaseless movements, entreating it to take them to their homes again; the remainder lay on the deck in a state of abject despair.

Among the wretches were women and children shrieking from a sheer terror, and a score of wounded men imploring the relief which no one dreamt of bringing them.

All of a sudden a negro appeared on deck, his face beaming with joy. He came to tell them that he had discovered where the white men stored their brandy; and his excitement and general demeanour clearly showed that he had already helped himself to some.

This piece of news silenced for a while the cries of the distracted slaves. They rushed down to the steward's room and gorged the liquor. In about an hour's time they were all dancing and roaring on deck, giving vent to the excesses of brutish drunkenness.

The noise of their singing and dancing mingled with the groans and sobs of the wounded. Night fell, and still the orgy continued.

Next morning, when they awoke, despair again possessed them. During the night a great number of the wounded had died. The vessel was surrounded by floating corpses, and clouds were lowering over the heavy sea. They held a conference.

Several experts in the art of magic, who had not dared speak of their knowledge before for fear of Tamango, now offered their services, and several potent incantations were tried. The failure of each attempt increased their despondency, till at length they appealed to Tamango, who was still behind his barricade.

After all, he was the wisest of them, and he alone could extricate them from the desperate condition into which he had brought them. An old man approached him with overtures of peace, and begged him to give them his advice. But Tamango turned a deaf ear to his entreaties.

The orgy of the day before was renewed, and continued for some time. They did nothing but howl and weep and tear their hair, or drink and sleep. Several died of drinking, others jumped into the sea or stabbed themselves.

One morning Tamango left his fort and advanced to the stump of the mainmast.

"Slaves!" he shouted, "the Spirit has appeared to me in a dream and revealed to me the means of helping you to return to your homes. You deserve to be abandoned to your fates, but I pity the women and children who are crying. I pardon you. Listen!"

All the negroes bowed their heads submissively, and gathered round him.

"Only the white men," continued Tamango, "know the mystic formulas which guide these massive wooden houses; but we can steer without difficulty those small boats, which are like our own" (he pointed to the sloop and the other ship's boats). "Let us fill them with provisions, set out in them, and row in the direction of the wind. My Master and yours will make it blow in the direction of our homes."

His belief was that by rowing straight ahead they were certain to come, sooner or later, to a land inhabited by black men; for he had heard his mother say that white men lived in their ships, and that black men possessed the earth.

Soon afterwards everything was ready to be embarked, but only the sloop and one small boat were found to be serviceable. It was impossible to find room for the eighty negroes who were still alive, so the sick and wounded had to be abandoned. The majority of them begged to be slain rather than be left.

After endless difficulties the two boats were got under way, so heavily laden that they might at any moment be swamped in such a choppy sea. Tamango and Ayché were in the sloop, which was soon left behind by the other boat—a mere cock-boat, and far less overcharged.

The wailing of the poor wretches who had been left behind on board the brig was still audible when a big wave suddenly caught the sloop athwart and swamped her. In less than a minute she had disappeared.

The smaller boat saw the catastrophe, and immediately the oars were plied with redoubled energy, for fear of having to pick up those who were shipwrecked. Nearly all who were in the sloop were drowned. Only a dozen or so managed to reach the vessel again, among whom were Tamango and Ayché. When the sun set they could see the other boat far away on the horizon; no one knows what became of it.

About a score of human beings, crowded together, now tossed about on a stormy sea, now scorched by the fierce heat of the sun, fought daily for what scanty remains of food there were—every scrap of biscuit entailing a fight. The weaker died, not because the stronger killed him, but because he chose to let him expire.

After a few days only two were alive on board the good brig "Hope"—Ayché and Tamango.

One night the sea was rough, the wind blew high, and the darkness was so intense that one end of the ship could not be seen from the other. Ayché lay on a mattress in the captain's room and Tamango sat at her feet. They had not spoken a word for many hours. "Tamango," murmured Ayché at length, "it is I who have brought all this suffering upon you."

"I do not suffer," he answered quickly, and threw the half-biscuit, which he still had left, on the mattress beside her.

"Keep it yourself," she said gently, returning the biscuit. "I am no longer hungry. Besides, why eat? Is not mine hour come?"

Tamango got up without answering and staggered to the deck, where he sat down against the stump of the mast. His head lolled on his breast, and he began to sing his tribal war song.

Suddenly a loud cry reached his ear, in spite of the noise of the tempest; a light flashed; other shouts followed, and a huge black ship glided swiftly past the brig—so close that Tamango could see her yards pass over his head. He only saw two faces in the light of a lantern which hung from a mast. They shouted again; then their vessel, swept along by the storm, disappeared into the darkness.

Doubtless the men on watch had caught sight of the disabled hulk, but the violence of the tempest had prevented their tacking. The next moment Tamango saw the flash of a cannon and heard the report; then another flash, but no report; then he saw nothing more.

On the morrow not a sail was visible on the horizon. Tamango threw himself down on his mattress and closed his eyes. His wife Ayché had died that night.

I do not know how long it was before an English frigate, the "Bellona," sighted a dismasted vessel, to all appearances abandoned by her crew. They sent a sloop alongside, and found a negress dead and a negro by her side, so sag-gard and so thin that he looked like a skeleton. He was unconscious, but there was still a breath left in him.

The doctor took charge of him and did all he could for him, so that when they reached Kingston Tamango had regained his health. He was asked to give an account of his adventures, and he told them all he could remember. The Jamaica planters suggested that he should be hanged as a rebel, but the governor was a kind-hearted man and took an in-

terest in the negro, whose crime was, after all, justifiable, since he had but acted in self-defence; and, besides, the men he had murdered were only Frenchmen. He was treated in the same way as the slaves who are found on board a captured slave trader. They set him at liberty. And he earned three-pence a day besides his keep.

One day the colonel of the 75th caught sight of this splendid specimen of a man, and made him a drummer in his regimental band. Tamango learnt a little English, but hardly ever spoke. To make up for that he was always drinking rum.

THE END

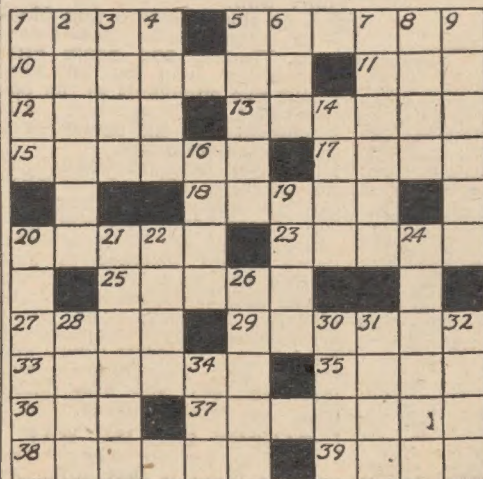
QUIZ for today

1. Calipash is a musical instrument, tobacco pipe, wild flower, flesh of turtle, sweetmeat, soft drink?
2. Who wrote (a) "Battle of the Books," (b) "Battle of Lake Regillus"?
3. Which of the following is an "intruder," and why: Carmen, Elijah, Il Trovatore, Lohengrin, Faust, Magic Flute?
4. Amnesia is loss of memory, an African snake, a flower, a girl's name, a medicinal herb?
5. Who said, "You can fool some of the people all of the time"?
6. Who was Erato?
7. Which of the following are mis-spelt: Phthisis, Psychology, Pseudo, Psaltar, Ptarmigan, Ptomane?
8. What is the distance between London and Buenos Ayres?
9. Who was Peregrine Pickle?
10. Correct the misquotation, "The quality of mercy is unstrained." Who wrote it?
11. "The Marseillaise" was composed in 1592, 1692, 1792, 1892?
12. What is a relict?

Answers to Quiz in No. 154

1. American reindeer.
2. (a) Lewis Carroll, (b) J. M. Barrie.
3. Essex has a coastline; the others have not.
4. Reverend.
5. Pepys, in his Diary.
6. Captain Marryat.
7. Ankus, Insular.
8. Nine.
9. The subject of a poem by Wordsworth.
10. "Haste away so soon," Herrick, in "To Daffodils."
11. 1907.
12. A Savoyard.

CROSSWORD CORNER



CLUES ACROSS.

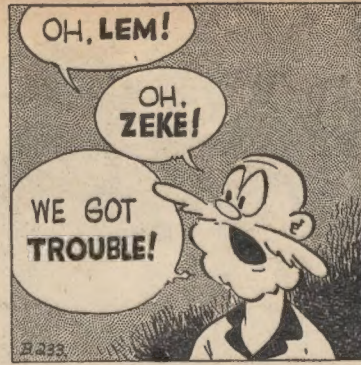
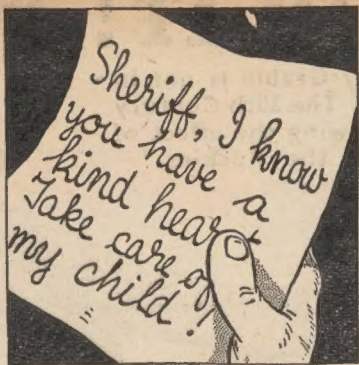
- 1 Forsaken.
- 5 Small birds.
- 10 On water.
- 11 Novel.
- 12 Deer perfume.
- 13 Sharp rock.
- 15 Halve.
- 17 Unrestrained.
- 18 Possession.
- 20 Twig broom.
- 23 Regions.
- 25 Chirp.
- 27 Fervour.
- 29 Plant fluid.
- 33 Outskirts.
- 35 Gap.
- 36 Hang limply.
- 37 Current units.
- 38 Vigour.
- 39 Notable deed.

CLUES DOWN.

- 1 Young animal.
- 2 Horsey.
- 3 Bother.
- 4 Convey.
- 5 Liquid measures.
- 6 Confection.
- 7 Write.
- 8 Relate.
- 9 Vegetables.
- 14 Pitcher.
- 16 Occurred.
- 19 Suffer.
- 20 Perplex.
- 21 Long narrow band.
- 22 Boy's name.
- 24 Flowering shrub.
- 26 Adversary.
- 28 Metal.
- 30 Cook.
- 31 Went vehemently.
- 32 Others.
- 34 Interject wisecracks.

IMP COACH R
NORMAN LATE
CROUP CORAL
HOPS SLUDGE
SEETHED N
EEL OAF APT
N SULTANA
ATTIRE DIRE
COONS TIMED
TWIG ROTUND
S LEVER STY

BEELZEBUB JONES



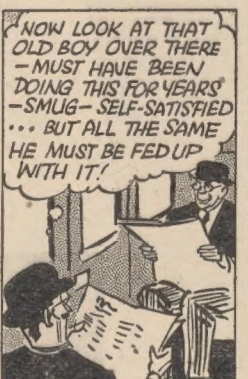
BELINDA



POPEYE



RUGGLES



GARTH



JUST JAKE



JACK WHITE CORKER UP

By the Old Tough

TELL me, brother, if you are of somewhat advanced years, if you know of a pleasanter way of spending a sweet summer afternoon than by reclining on the greensward in the shade, with a tankard of nut-brown ale, and your pipe well charged with your favourite mixture, watching a keen game of cricket?

The white-coated umpires, the white-flannelled players, the carefully prepared pitch and the stretch of glorious green outfield, together with the constant movements of the white figures, form a perfect picture.

If there be a keen duel going on between an "ace" bowler and a couple of crack batsmen, then the picture is complete. I used particularly to enjoy such a stern encounter if "Farmer" Jack White, of Somerset and England was the bowler.

Jack White looked a typical West Country gentleman farmer, fair, but with the healthy tan of the country on his face and arms; rather heavily built, but always the picture of health. Rather slow in his run up to the wicket, he used to deliver what appeared to be a most innocent ball; in fact, it looked as if he had kind feelings towards the batsman and wished him well.

The batsman who had not met Jack before was inclined to think the same thing, and, lashing out, might despatch the ball swiftly to the boundary.

Jack, gently smiling, would walk back to his starting point and then trot up and deliver, as it seemed, an exactly similar ball. Again the batsman, full of confidence, would lash out, but, alas! poor rabbit, he only felt a slight click on the side of the bat, heard a loud "Owzatt," and saw the umpire's fatal finger go up as he fell to a catch in the slips.

But to see "Farmer" at his best was when two good batsmen were steadily getting on top of the bowling; then Jack used to settle down for a long spell of bowling, "corking down" one end, while he would keep ringing the changes with all his other bowlers at the other end.

Now, this "corking down" business needs a very skilful bowler, for, in the first place, he has to keep the run-getting down at one end--no easy matter when good batsmen are set--and he has to keep nibbling at their wicket all the time.

It is no good just bowling a perfect length all the time--the good batsman, when set, will find a way of dealing with that. Every ball must be slightly different; only slightly, in pace, spin, length and trajectory, and then the batsman begins to gnash his teeth, for he cannot get on with the job.

I went out during the interval at Lords one match when Jack White had been "corking up" one end for two hours. There was a smallish spot worn absolutely bare just in front of one wicket where he had pitched ball after ball, all slightly different in length or spin, etc., and during those two hours the batsman, although well set, had only scored thirty runs, off him.

He had broken up the partnership by carelessly (I wonder!) sending down a slow full toss to leg, and the batsman, amazed at such good fortune, had dealt with it faithfully.

But Jack had some little time before posted a man on that boundary, and the batsman had forgotten. A well-judged boundary catch was the result. Those slow-speaking West Country men have no guile in them, what?

THE OLD TOUGH

YOU'VE read the last yarns of "The Old Tough." Laurie Woodhouse is dead.

Ex-Haileybury and Cambridge, he played cricket for Gloucestershire, and figured in county Rugger and hockey. In his day he was a noted authority on cricket, and many famous cricketers earned their first Test chance thanks to his excellent judgment and recommendation.

Intimate friend of the great sportsmen of his day, he had a store of anecdotes any sports writer would envy, but he seldom talked.

Cricket was his great love, and Lord's his happy hunting ground, though Rugger (particularly Services) came a very close second.

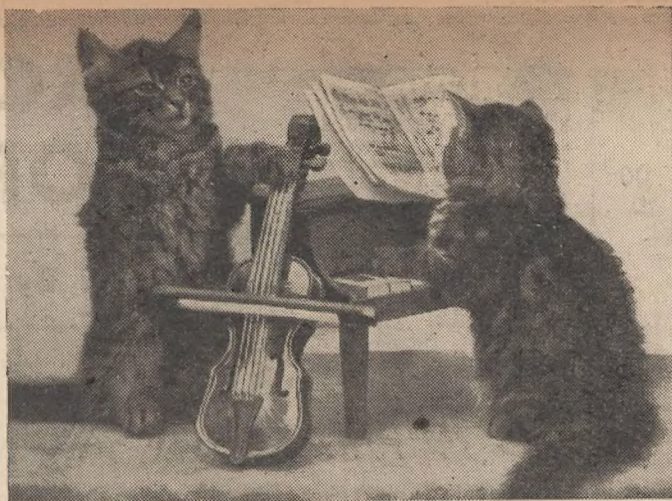
AL MALE.

Send your Stories,
Jokes and Ideas
to the Editor

Good Morning

All communications to be addressed to: "Good Morning," C/o Press Division, Admiralty, London, S.W.1

"And now we arrive at the 'Cat and Fiddle' just in time for the opening bars of 'Drinking.'"



JUMP TO IT!

Sorry boys. Betty Grable is not in your "P.T." class. The 20th Century star is merely showing the effect of "Springtime in the Rockies."



This England

"When Day is Done." A scene at the Allenford Pack Horse Bridge, near Minehead, Somerset



"I can't understand all the fuss Mummy makes about weeding. Do you know I've already filled one dustbin with the most lovely weeds."



SHIP'S CAT SIGNS OFF

"LUCKY dog."



There's nothing like giving thanks for a good day, especially when there's a comfortable bed at the end of it.